

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the application in light of the following amendments and remarks is respectfully requested.

**Status of the Claims**

Claims 10-21 were previously pending.

Claim 10 has been amended. Support for the amendment to claim 10 may be found, for example, in the Specification in paragraph 0015 and in Figures 1-3.

Claims 22 and 23 have been added. No new matter is added.

Upon entry of the amendments, claims 10-23 will be pending.

**Allowable Subject Matter**

Applicants appreciatively thank the Examiner for the allowance of claim 21. Applicants also appreciatively thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter recited in claims 17 and 19. Applicants have added new claim 22, which recites the features of claim 19 in independent form. Applicants submit that claim 22 is in condition for allowance.

**Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103**

Claims 10-16, 18 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,337,465 to Spracklen et al. ("Spracklen") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,736,796 to Price et al. ("Price").

In response to Applicants' December 6, 2006 Amendment, the Examiner contends that Sparcklen's single-byte input/output port P is an interface that reads on the recited "first unit." See, Detailed Action, Item 1, Page 2, lines 6-8. The Examiner further contends that the "interface includes a first transmitter circuit part in Figure 4B connected to a first transmitter terminal TXD, and a first receiver circuit part in Figure 4C connected to a first receiver terminal RXD." (Detailed Action, Item 1, Page 2, lines 9-11.)

Applicants have amended independent claim 10 to recite that the “data transmission line directly connects the first transmitter circuit part, first receiver circuit, second transmitter circuit part, and second receiver circuit for bidirectional data transmission.”

Applicants respectfully submit that neither Spracklen nor Price disclose or suggest that the data transmission line is directly connected to the circuit parts as recited in claim 10. In contrast, Spracklen discloses that the RX and TX circuits, illustrated in Figures 4C and 4B, respectively, are connected to each other via the bus control 21. The RX and TX circuits are connected to the input/output port P through status 22 and buffer 20. *See*, Spracklen, Figure 4A. Therefore, in Spracklen, the channel 10, which the Examiner has equated to the “data transmission line” recited in the claims, is clearly **not** directly connected to the RX and TX circuits, located within the nodes 11. Instead, the channel 10 merely connects the nodes 11 to each other. *See*, Spracklen, Figure 1.

Applicants respectfully submit that Price also fails to disclose at least the above recited features of claim 10. Price fails to disclose the first circuit part having a first transmitter circuit and a first receiver circuit, and the second circuit part having a second transmitter circuit and a second receiver circuit, as recited in claim 10. Therefore, Price cannot disclose the features of the data transmission line recited in claim 10. At best, Price discloses that the transmission line 72 is connected to a driver 70 and a receiver 71. *See*, Price, col. 6, lines 15-19 and Figure 4. However, this can be considered to be equivalent to Spracklen’s disclosure of the channel 10 that connects the nodes 11.

Thus, Applicants submit that neither Spracklen nor Price, either individually or in combination, disclose that “the data transmission line directly connects the first transmitter circuit part, first receiver circuit, second transmitter circuit part, and second receiver circuit for bidirectional data transmission,” as recited in claim 10. Therefore, the combination of Spracklen and Price fails to disclose each and every feature recited in independent claim 10 and thus, cannot render claim 10 unpatentable.

Claims 11-16, 18, and 20 depend from claim 10. Applicants submit that dependent claims 11-16, 18, and 20 are patentable for at least the same reasons as base claim 10. Accordingly, for at least the reasons stated above, withdrawal of the rejection to claims 10-16, 18 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully requested.

**Added Claims**

New claim 22 recites the features of claim 19 in independent form. Applicants respectfully submit that added claim 22 is in condition for allowance.

New claim 23 depends from claim 10. Applicants submit that added claim 23 is patentable for at least the same reasons as base claim 10.

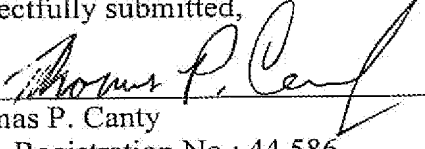
**CONCLUSION**

Each and every point raised in the Final Office Action mailed March 12, 2007 has been addressed on the basis of the above remarks. In view of the foregoing it is believed that pending claims are in condition for allowance and it is respectfully requested that the application be reconsidered and that all pending claims be allowed and the case passed to issue.

If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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